U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SUMMARY OF EXHIBIT

THE COST OF ROADS - GOOD AND BAD.
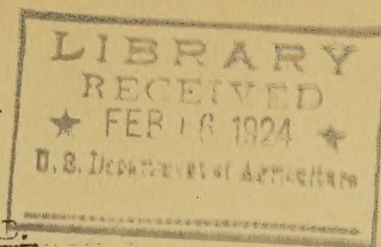
This exhibit drives home the fact that we pay the equivalent of the cost of improved roads whether we have them or not and that we pay less if we have them than if we have not. It consists of a booth approximately 13 feet across the front by 7 feet in height and 5 feet deep. On the three walls are paintings merging into a modeled foreground. On the left hand wall there is a somewhat conventionalized painting of a city from which emerges onto modeled foreground a broad street on which a miniature motor truck symbolizes the traffic contribution of the cities to our country roads. At the right of the model is a painting which represents a farm home with barn and silo surrounded by typical farm landscape. From this painting there emerges onto the foreground a country road on which appears in the model a horse and wagon, the wagon laden with farm produce, typifying rural traffic. The road from the city and the road from the farm merge at the center of the model into a broad highway which runs directly back to the rear panel. At the point where the road enters the painting at the rear it branches and the two branches where the road enters the painting at the rear it branches and the two branches are shown in the painting - one going to the right and the other to the left across the hills and valleys of a typical rural landscape. The road to the left is represented as a modern improved highway. That to the right is a mud road. At the forks of the road what appears to be a road sign is actually a screen upon which is projected from the rear of the booth, a series of brief paragraphs in which the message of the Department is driven home. These paragraphs which tell the story are as follows:

Mr. Farmer - Mr. Business Man:
You stand at the point of decision.
Which road will you take?

To the right is the good road -
Scientifically built under engineering supervision.
To the left is the unimproved earth road -
Like Topsy it just "growed."

Be assured that you must pay for either.
For the good road you pay in taxes
And in automobile license fees.
For the bad road you pay:
In excessive gasoline consumption
In heavy repairs for vehicles
In vehicles worn out before their time
In waste and inconvenience.

You and your fellow citizens
Pay annually in worn out vehicles alone
More than a billion dollars.
Good roads will reduce this expense
By not less than a quarter of a billion.

You pay each year
More than a billion dollars
For gasoline fuel for motor vehicles

Good roads will reduce this expense at least
Another quarter of a billion.

You pay another billion dollars each year
For repairs for motor vehicles
Good roads will reduce this expense by still
Another quarter of a billion.

Which means you pay unnecessarily
On account of bad roads
At least three quarters of a billion dollars
For motor vehicle fuel, repairs and depreciation.

No one knows how much you are wasting
In other ways
On account of bad roads.

What are you doing to be rid of this expense?
You are spending less than a billion dollars
                A year
For the construction and maintenance of roads
                    And
A part of that goes to make barely passable
The unimproved roads.

Figure it out for yourself
Doesn't it look as if you are paying more
In dollars and cents
For bad roads than for good roads.

What are you getting for your money?
From the bad roads -
Costly transportation
Isolated farms
Stagnant business
Wasted time
Poor markets
Inefficient schools
Restricted social opportunities
Drudgery.

From the good roads -
Easy communication between farm and market
Prosperous business
Economy of time
Better markets
Consolidated schools and better rural education
Improved social conditions
Pleasure.

You cannot share in the benefits of improved roads
Unless you pay for them:
But you pay for them whether you get them or not.

The question is -
Would you rather be taxed for bad roads
Or for good roads?